

Horizon Compensation Programme Board Note

Chair: Carl Creswell (CC) Date: 11/04/2024

Attendees

Previous Actions

- No new actions discussed

Project Dashboards

- RB Provided an overall update on the Horizon Programme. Reflecting that there had been a political demand to see the schemes be run closer together, pressure to get an HSS appeals scheme up and running, OC2 was also up and coming and there were the accompanying pressures that would come with this.
- RB remarked that these pressures are reflective of the need to form a cohesive Programme management function and that a Programme Management team was coming together to make this a reality.
- CC Responded to RB's comments in agreement. Reflecting that what DBT would take up in its remit would be at the discretion of ministerial decision.
- CC remarked that even with DBT taking on a bigger role of leading and delivering Horizon compensation schemes, that there would be continued Post Office presence throughout the delivery of these schemes.
- **GLO**
 - CC Reflected that the delivery confidence RAG Rating had been upgraded to Amber from Amber / Red. That this was mainly spurred by Royal Assent of the Bill and the a significant number of 75k offers being accepted. Though it was reflected that in the coming weeks there would be an expected plateau in case statistics, as the more complex claims come in.
- **OC**
 - There had been some progress on 450k top ups. CC expressed concern that some claimants' lawyers were not putting in claims, with quite a few claims yet to come in.
- **HSS**
 - CC remarked that the scheme had seen a surge in late applicants following the publicity of the ITV Drama, reflecting further that the Post Office team were doing a good job in turning around the intense volume of applicants. There was an optimistic view that the upcoming (as of this board's date) 75k payments would aid in alleviating the caseload.
 - Simon reflected on the delivery confidence, sharing his sentiment that the delivery confidence of the scheme should be changed to red, primarily due to the overwhelming number of late applicants, and the mobilisation of resource to deal with this.
- **Postmaster Detriment**

- This scheme was progressing. CC's main concern on this workstream was capture affected claimants having the ability to apply for compensation as the previous business case did not allow for this.
- **Suspension Remuneration**
 - Linked to detriment heading.
- **General discussion**
 - There was some discussion about the programme being caught on the backfoot around the handling of strategic communications. RB responded to this critique mentioning that as part of the growing programme management function that the team would be receiving fresh resource that would be dedicated to managing strategic communications across all schemes.
 - Simon expanded the discussion about the issue of capture, that the launch coming up in April was not to address capture but for PPR.
 - Simon also provided some feedback on OC's RAG Rating, that what's missing is the positives about mass exonerations, and this could reflect a better delivery confidence rating. CC added that the Red Rating of the workstream reflected the overall outlook of the workstream and this would remain.
 - Eleanor – in regard to the bill, capture convictions they are not going to be covered by the bill, some questions around if the conviction is overturned, how will they be compensated, the cases are also outside of the horizon window, some difficulty around connecting these cases to horizon and what sort of compensation can be provided. Some thoughts were shared around if there was a need for a wider work to consider how claimants who had been affected by POL processes in general - irrespective of Horizon, if they would or could be compensated.
 - RB shared that the minister and adv board commissioned reports monthly on scheme progress, first would be early April. Though RB remarked that this would further raise the profile of what is going on.

Statistics

- CC walked the board through the statistics slide, covering some light context and narrative behind some of the stats.

Risks

- HMT proposed the addition of a system capacity risk, outlining that lawyers, medical specialists, forensic accountants that need to be on there, risks across all scheme gaining 2000+ cases in short order. Is there the capacity to cover this all.
- RB mentioned that risk need to be thought about on current political context, risk that we get called to disengage post office or that certain categories of loss are asked to be compensated more heavily.
- James – the matrix as presented at the board did not sufficiently cover the level of effort or pressure that post office was facing at the moment
- Eleanor – Family members, pressure has arisen around support for family members e.g., Mental health support, xh01 needs to reflect this, this increases the grading of the risk
- Strategic comms failure risk
- Some points made by the select committee should be reflected as risks
- Simon added that forthcoming changes need to be captured as a risk, the risk is there will be a delay in payments to postmasters, the key risk is that political scrutiny and over involvement will cause these delays.

- On second detailed risk there was progress being made on a court decision on the mores decisions on bankrupts
- Action to bring back issues list